As per the information collected by the National Centre of Organic Farming (NCOF), total production of organic food/fibre and other organic commodities was 4.90 lakh metric tonne during the year 2006-07.

(c) To ensure good quality of food products under organic farming a quality assurance system has been notified by Ministry of Commerce under "National Programme on Organic Production (NPOP).

Under the National Project on Organic Farming, efforts are made to promote organic farming through:

(i) Financial support to organic inputs production infrastructure.

(ii) Awareness creation and Human Resource Development through trainings, demonstrations, seminars etc.

(iii) Capacity building through Service Providers.

Suicide by farmers

553. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how many farmers have committed suicide in Vidharba region and other parts of the country since 01 January, 2009 and the details thereof; and

(b) the details of measures being taken by Government or proposed to be taken, to counter this trend of suicides even after compensation packages were doled out?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) In 2008-09, the suicides by farmers have been reported from the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat only. A Statement indicating the number of suicides during the last three years, as reported by the State Governments till date, is enclosed (*See* below).

To address the problem of suicide by farmers, the Government of India approved a rehabilitation package of Rs. 16978.69 crore for 31 Districts in the four States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala reporting comparatively higher number of suicides by farmers in 2006-07. The package being implemented includes both immediate and medium term measures. Measures taken by Government include implementation of the Scheme of debt waiver and debt relief for farmers announced in the Union Budget 2008-09 to address the problem of indebtedness of farmers. The scheme, implemented by Ministry of Finance, is estimated to benefit 3.68 crore farmers with total waiver and relief amounting to Rs.65318.33 crore. Measures taken by Government for revitalization of agriculture sector include launching of new schemes, namely, National Food Security Mission to improve production and productivity of foodgrains and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana with an objective to improve growth rate of agriculture and allied sectors and to incentivise the States so as to increase public investment in agriculture and allied sectors.

Statement

Details of cases of suicide by farmers as per reports received from State Govts. (as on date)

S.No.	Name of the State	Period	No. (Based on the figures reported by State Govts.) Total	of which in Package Districts
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2006	522	511
		2007	377	365
		2008	124	122
2.	Karnataka	2006-07	346	132
		2007-08	342	140
		2008-09 (upto August' 08)	152	59
3.	Maharashtra	2006	2355	1448
		2007	1985	1246
		2008 (up to Sept. 2008)	N.A.	573
4.	Gujarat	2006	149	
		2007	103	
		2008 (upto July, 2008)	21	

Export of Tulsi from India

554. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our country is producing Tulsi on a large scale by organic method for the International requirements;

(b) if so, the total estimated quantity which is being exported every year along with the value in both quantity and foreign exchange;

(c) the steps being taken to educate the farmers across the country to improve the production of Tulsi to boost exports; and

(d) the names of the countries which are importing Tulsi from India and steps taken to send it to other countries using Tulsi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) As per the data received from organic certification bodies by APEDA, organic Tulsi is produced for export by a Company "Organic India Private Limited", Lucknow. Government of India through the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) - whose one of main objective is catering to the export markets, have initiated a number of projects throughout India. NPOP is involved with setting up of model organic farms, providing guidance on certification, promoting composting and other practices relevant to organic cultivation, extending subsidies and providing training to support organic agriculture, including production of Tulsi.